

## DRAFT ALLIANT SB QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"These questions and answers are being posted in order to assist industry with the upcoming release of the Alliant Small Business solicitation. The Solicitation, when released, will replace and supersede these questions/answers in their entirety when it is issued. These posted questions and answers shall have no legal significance in connection with the Solicitation prior to Award, or have any legal significance in connection with interpretation of the resulting contracts which may be awarded under the Solicitation, or any Orders placed under any of the awarded contracts."

### SUBCONTRACTING

1. **Can a small business who is priming the Alliant Small Business GWAC be a partner/subcontractor to a large prime on the Alliant (full and open) GWAC?**

Yes, Alliant SB and Alliant are two separate and distinct solicitations/contracts.

2. **Can a large business be a prime on the Alliant contract and also be a subcontractor to a small business in the Alliant Small Business contract?**

Yes

3. **Can you prime and subcontract within the Alliant Small Business?**

Yes

4. **Explain prime 51% rules. Can SB teams collectively secure 51%?**

In accordance with FAR clause 52.219-14 "Limitations on Subcontracting" (for services) at least 50 percent of the cost of contract performance incurred for personnel shall be expended for employees of the concern. "Concern" is defined as the prime small business contractor. Subcontractors' personnel costs do not apply towards the prime meeting its performance obligation of meeting this 50% requirement. A bona-fide small business joint-venture collectively must meet the 50% performance obligation. A bona-fide SBA approved mentor-protégé arrangement collectively (with the mentors' work being counted as the protégé's) must meet its performance obligation.

5. **Is there a \$ size limit on the subs on the Alliant SB opportunity?**

There is no size limit for subcontractors. However, the Offeror's response to managing the "limitations on subcontracting" clause and associated SBA regulations will be evaluated. Unjustified reliance upon subcontractors will result in a significant weakness or deficiency for Contractor Performance Plan (CPP) item three.

6. **Are consultants or "leased" employees count towards the 51% requirement?**

In accordance with FAR clause 52.219-14 the cost of contract performance incurred for personnel shall be expended for employees of the concern (Prime). If the person is not an employee of the concern, as established under IRS guidelines, then he/she does not count towards the 50% rule.

**7. Can you expand on what's meant by "manage limitations on subcontracting"?**

Basically, a plan for accomplishing (adhering to) the requirements of FAR clause 52.219-14 and its associated SBA regulations. This is especially critical when you rely on subcontractors in your offer. The more reliance on subcontractors, the better job you have to do in explaining how you will make that work within the context of 52.219-14 and associated SBA regulations.

**8. For the letter of commitments from subcontractors please explain what is meant by "superscript numbering system."?**

When an Offeror proposes to accomplish certain work scope elements in the CPP with the use of a subcontractor(s), the Offeror should use a superscript numbering system cross-referencing the subcontractor to the letter of commitment provided to enhance clarity and organization.

**9. Can additional subcontractors be added after award or are you locked in with the team proposed?**

Primes may consider additional subcontractors as they determine how to respond to task order opportunities. When a task order opportunity is fixed-price, no additional government approval/consent is required to subcontract (you still have your 52.219-14 requirements). When a task order is not fixed-price, advance government approval/consent to subcontract is required unless you have an approved purchasing system as discussed at FAR clause 52.244-2.

**10. Since the SB contracts must support global IT requirements, which almost dictates having 1 or more large company subcontractors on a small business team to achieve a global presence. Doesn't that defeat the purpose of having small business teams?**

Each small business offeror must make a business decision in determining the composition of the "team" they use to offer.

**11. Does limitations on subcontracting means 51% or more over the life of the task order (e.g., base + 4 option year) or 51% or more on year one?**

The small business prime must perform at least 50 percent over the life of the contract. This will be monitored by GSA with submission of semiannual subcontracting reports as required by the contract. See Section G.17 of the draft RFP and 13 CFR 124.510 (see question 6).

**12. Are there limitations on how many teams you can sub on? No.**

**13. Will there be a web site for primes & subs to locate each other?**

The Alliant SB website at [www.gsa.gov/alliantsb](http://www.gsa.gov/alliantsb) (also reachable at [www.gsa.gov/sbgwac](http://www.gsa.gov/sbgwac)) has a survey that lets parties identify if they are interested in teaming. We will begin posting the list of parties interested in teaming on the Alliant SB website soon.

**14. Can you describe what you would consider an ideal teaming arrangement in light of subcontract limitations found in section L.2.e.3?**

This a business decision of the offering company.

**15. For a small business Alliant SB prime, what are the guidelines/restrictions on the amount of subcontracting to other small businesses?**

There are no restrictions on the number of subcontractors; there is a restriction that the prime contractor performs at least 50 percent cost of the work with the prime contractor's employees

over the life of the contract.

- 16. Is there any limitations on cross-over, e.g., can a small business company prime & be a subcontractor to other SB team(s)?**

A small business concern may propose as a prime and also be a subcontractor on another Offeror's proposal.

- 17. Will there be special consideration for companies in the mentor protégé program?**

SBA approved mentor-protégé concerns are permitted to compete. Other agencies have mentor-protégé programs but their approvals are agency specific as opposed to SBA's that are Governmentwide. There is no special consideration in the evaluation and award.

- 18. Under SBA approved mentor protégé where the mentor is a large business, discuss the mentor protégé eligibility for this contract?**

Please refer to 13 CFR 121.103(h)(3)(iii) and 13 CFR 124.520 as two among many sources of information.

- 19. Will Alliant and Alliant SB be scored and awarded independently? i.e., Will teaming on Alliant as a small business sub impact scoring as a prime on Alliant SB?**

Alliant and Alliant SB are separate and distinct solicitations/contracts and will be evaluated and awarded independently.

- 20. Are subcontractor qualifications counted as important as prime qualifications? Does a joint venture have any advantages/disadvantages when compared with prime and sub in SB Alliant?**

Please review Sections L and M of the draft RFP for the best statements concerning our evaluation intentions. Please review the characteristics of joint-ventures and subcontractors given the nature of Alliant SB as a small business set-aside.

- 21. Will small businesses be penalized for having a preponderance of their team comprised of large businesses versus small businesses?**

The more reliance on subcontractors, the more critical the plan to manage the "limitations on subcontracting" clause.

- 22. What is perceived as better to GSA – 1) Small business prime w/several large subs; 2) small business prime w/many small business subs; or 3) joint venture w/many small business team members?**

It is the Offeror's business determination as to the composition of the team.

- 23. Will "consent" to subcontract be required?**

Please see question 9.

- 24. What is the SBA Process for pre-approving subcontracts?**

There is no pre-approval process for subcontracts by SBA. SBA does have regulations regarding the amount of work a small business has to perform under a small business set-aside. Those regulations are applied to this contract(s) via FAR 52.219-14.

- 25. Will there be any facilitation (by the gov't) to match prospective or interested parties to team?**

Please see question 13.

- 26. Can an international company doing business in U.S. be an Alliant SB subcontractor?**

Refer to FAR 19.003 definition of a "concern," and FAR 19.101 "Affiliates" as the critical cites. As the solicitation is set aside for small business, it is excepted from Trade Agreements (FAR 25.401(a)(1)) and the Buy American Act does not apply to services; therefore, the only applicable parts of FAR Part 25 are 25.6 Trade Sanctions and 25.7 Prohibited Sources.

## **JOINT VENTURES**

- 27. Can we have a joint venture of several businesses each meeting \$21 million size standard?**

There is not a limitation on the number of parties involved in a joint-venture. Members of a joint-venture are permitted to individually qualify to the size standard pursuant to 13 CFR 121.103(h)(3)(i)(B)(1). No SBA pre-approval of a joint-venture under Alliant SB is required.

- 28. With regard to joint ventures how will the size of the JV be determined? For example, if one partner has revenues of \$30 M and other has revenue of \$10 M, will you use the average?**

See question 27.

- 29. If multiple companies form joint venture and the total revenues (average from last 3 years) of the member companies is below the size standard, does the JV still need approval from SBA? If yes, why?**

See question 27. There will be a requirement to submit the joint-venture contract with the offer.

- 30. What are the joint venture requirements?**

Potential Offeror's should seek their own legal counsel in proposing under a small business set-aside in order to meet the requirements of SBA regulations (13 CFR 121.103) and the FAR. The joint-venture contract must identify the managing venturer, the joint-venture members and who will have signature authority on behalf of the joint-venture. The party signing the offer for the joint-venture must be listed as having such authority in the joint-venture contract. The joint-venture offeror and each joint-venture member shall submit separate certifications and representations mandated in Section K of the solicitation.

- 31. In a joint venture of all small businesses, if one of the JV partners outgrows the size standard (during recertification), do the remaining JV partners reconstitute the JV without that non-qualifying partner?**

That is a matter which GSA would defer to SBA.

- 32. In a joint venture arrangement, will GSA consider the combined past performance of the joint venture members as opposed to only considering past performance from the managing partner?**

All pertinent past performance of each joint venture member can be used. A joint-venture equals

the sum of its parts.

- 33. Is there one POC at the SBA to answer questions re: teams & JVs as it relates to the FAR and how those sections of the FAR are being applied to the requirement?**

The procuring contracting officer is your point of contact for Alliant SB.

- 34. Do the same “limitations on sub-contracting” apply to teams or JVs composed solely of SBA certified small businesses?**

The limitations on subcontracting clause apply to the concern submitting an offer in response to the solicitation. If a joint venture entity (Offeror) proposes using subcontractors in addition to their own resources then the clause applies.

- 35. In a joint venture, how will the \$21 million dollar size standard impact the JV if one of the JV partners exceeds the size standard over 3 years?**

See question 31.

- 36. Joint ventures, all businesses must be small business. Will they still be considered a small business if the combined size is outside the small business?**

See question 27.

- 37. If a joint venture is newly-formed for Alliant SB procurement, how is past performance reported since no “open rating” report exists?**

The past performance of joint-venture members automatically inheres to the combined joint-venture business entity. A joint-venture shall submit the required completed past performance forms directly to the Government rather than Open Ratings (See question 54).

## **SMALL BUSINESS SIZE STANDARD**

- 38. The selected principal IT services based NAICS code has a \$21 million size standard. Please explain what a size standard?**

The Small Business Administration establishes size standards on an industry by industry basis. For the purposes of the Alliant SB solicitation the primary NAICS code has been established as 541512, Computer Systems Design Services. To be considered a small business under this NAICS code a company's average annual receipts (revenue) from the previous three years cannot exceed \$21 million (rolling average). Please see 13 CFR 121 and FAR Part 19.

- 39. If you exceed \$21M size standard at 5 yr renewal, will you still be qualified for renewal provided your performance is satisfactory?**

If the Alliant SB contractor outgrows the applicable size standard the option period will not be exercised. See Section G.23 (Exit Strategy/Off Ramp at the Option Period and Re-certification) of the Alliant SB Draft RFP.

- 40. If a small business bids and wins an Alliant SB contract then outgrows the size standard during the base period, will that SB and its team have an automatic on-ramp to the Alliant LB contract?**

No. The Alliant and Alliant SB are two separate and distinct solicitations/contracts.

- 41. GSA has recently restated that the agency may move to “annual recertification” of a company size. Does Alliant plan to have an annual on-ramp/off-ramp process to push companies off that become large and add new SB’s?**

In accordance with H.3 of the Alliant SB Draft RFP, the GSA intends to consider an on-ramp/open-season at the option period if it is deemed to be in the Government’s best interest. If SBA changes its policy on this matter GSA will incorporate those changes.

- 42. Will companies that exceed \$21M in avg. 3-year revenue be able to submit a proposal as prime?**

No

- 43. If a SB is awarded a 10 year TO & after 5 year option it has surpassed the \$21M what happens to the continuity of that TO?**

See Section F.3 (Term of Contract and Orders) of the Alliant SB Draft RFP.

- 44. In addition to a GSA schedule and the \$21 million standard, are there any other requirements to qualify for the contract?**

There is no requirement for a GSA schedule. Please review the solicitation for evaluation criteria.

- 45. GSA’s 8(a) Stars and DOC’s Commits had tiered size standards for small businesses. Why was that not done for Alliant SB?**

GSA’s 8(a) STARS GWAC does not have a tiered size standard structure.

See also FAR 19.102, particularly (c) and (d) that require selecting the single most applicable NAICS code for a procurement, i.e., the standard that best describes or accounts for the greatest percentage of the contract price respectively.

- 46. It seems that successful small business awardees are likely to exceed size by the date of re-certification. If many companies can’t be re-certified, would you open a solicitation again or work with fewer companies for the next 5 years?**

In accordance with H.3 of the Alliant SB Draft RFP, the GSA intends to consider an on-ramp/open-season at the option period if it is deemed to be in the Government’s best interest.

- 47. What if you exceed 21 million during the award period?**

See questions 39-43 and 46.

- 48. Will the small business awards be allocated by type or %, i.e., # of 8(a)s, # of WO, # of HubZone, etc.?**

No.

- 49. Is this an 8(a) set-aside or this is bundled together?**

Alliant SB is a total small business set-aside in accordance with FAR 19.5. It is not an 8(a) set-aside. This procurement is not bundled.

- 50. Will the agency get 8(a) credit? Will there be any QA such as CMM1 or ISO to get this award?**

Agencies do not get 8(a) credit unless work is specifically set-aside for the 8(a) program. The Alliant SB is not an 8(a) set-aside. However, agencies will get the small business credit. The evaluation criteria are spelled out in Section L and Section M of the Alliant SB Draft RFP.

## **PAST PERFORMANCE**

- 51. Would a startup company not having been in business for 3 years be considered “risky” when you award the contract?**

GSA will be using a best value determination for awards in accordance with the evaluation criteria enumerated in Section L and M of the solicitation.

- 52. We recently submitted our MOBIS proposal. Can we use the Open Ratings survey report we used for MOBIS in our submission of the SB Alliant proposal?**

Yes. The final RFP will state that offerors may use current Schedule 70, MOBIS, PES, LogWorld, FABS, and Corporate/Consolidated FSS schedule contracts.

- 53. Please clarify – whether 6 mos. Old open-ratings are OK. Do we have to submit new past performance open-ratings?**

Section L.2.d states existing Open Ratings reports have to be within the last three years of the original deadline for receipt of offers.

- 54. Prime contractor past performance requirement for \$3 million contracts precludes small, small businesses from being awarded an Alliant SB contract for 10 years. What’s your plan to include them, beyond “teaming” arrangements w/large business?**

We have not imposed that monetary standard on past performance.

- 55. Please clarify the number of past performance cites required for Alliant SB?**

Open Ratings will accept no less than six past performance references. Up to twenty past performance references can be submitted to Open Ratings. Open ratings must receive at least four responses in order to issue a past performance report. Section L.2.d of the solicitation provides this information. If the offeror is required to send past performance information directly to the contracting officer, per Section L.2.d, the same guidelines apply, i.e., up to twenty but no less than six past performance references.

- 56. Can “owners” of a start-up company use their personal experience as “past performance” and “experience” required by Section L of the RFP?**

Please review the solicitation regarding the past performance of key corporate officers and individual experience.

- 57. Can company mergers between prospective team members allow past performance to measure from all?**

Each case is different. The specifics would have to be reviewed. We don’t provide advisory opinions on such matters.

58. **Concerning past performance – when grading proposals, will work performed for commercial entities and work performed for government agencies be graded equally?**

Yes.

59. **Can recent experiences be past performances?**

Individual projects could possibly be used for both experience and past performance, however, experience and past performance are two distinct (different) criteria.

60. **Please clarify statement “Offerors shall also present recent experience (but not past performance) with each work scope element in sequence.” By definition recent experience would be past performance. Can one list past performance contracts on recent experience list?**

Experience and past performance are different. Experience is having performed work of a given type. Past performance is a qualitative measure of your performance by a customer. It is conceivable that elements of a specific project could be utilized for both experience and past performance.

61. **Re: Sec. L.2.d, pg. L-6,7. I am not familiar w/ the D&B past contractual performance evaluation report. Does it apply to federal contracts only or is commercial experience permitted?**

Open Ratings accepts both commercial and government past performance.

62. **Does past performance only apply to federal contracts, or can it also be applied towards state/local/commercial past performance contracts?**

Open Ratings accepts state/local/commercial past performance references.

63. **Past performance. How do you present past performance of your subcontractors?**

Past performance applies to the prime offeror. Subcontractor past performance is not applicable.

64. **Can GSA Alliant SB bidders who are priming meet the “past performance” with the capabilities of their team or do they have to meet the “past performance” requirement on their own?**

Alliant SB offerors must meet the “past performance” requirements on their own. Please see question 37.

#### **EXPERIENCE (DEPTH & BREADTH)**

65. **Since the small business solicitation has 3 tiers, can a company that is awarded the lowest dollar amount be approved at a later date to a large dollar threshold amount?**

The tiers referenced in L.2.e.2 of the Draft RFP are for evaluation purposes only. Awards won't be linked to the tiers.

66. **L.2.e.2 demonstrate experience. (1) Can one contract satisfy more than one work scope element? (2) Are you looking for a maximum of three contract references for each tier within each work scope element?**

(1) Yes, one contract may satisfy more than one work scope element, however, only the value



of that particular portion of the contract must be delineated for the work scope element addressed. (2) Yes.

- 67. To address lack of the work scope areas we intend to use a mixture of “cc”, “hire”, and “sub.” Can we assign more than one of these identifiers to each FA work scope element?**

Yes,

- 68. Can a recent experience citation be used more than once if it applies to more than one work scope area?**

Yes. However, only the value of that particular portion of the contract (recent experience) must be delineated for the work scope element addressed

- 69. From a small business perspective, are you expecting responses to the RFP from small business to cover all of the tasks listed in the RFP? If so, how realistic is that for small businesses?**

It was necessary to establish substantive evaluation criteria to manage the high number of anticipated proposals, to ensure awards were made to offerors well qualified to perform the breadth of the work and to enable us to identify the most highly capable responsible offerors.

- 70. How many elements in each functional area does a bidder need to show past experience in to meet the award requirements?**

The Offeror does not have to respond to all elements in the experience matrix in order to have a “conforming proposal”. Proposals that show high levels of competency in a broader range of the criteria will be rated higher than those of equal capability in a narrower range of the criteria.

- 71. Does the proposal have to cover all the areas specified in Section C of the RFP to be considered a complete proposal?**

See Q 70. The work scope elements to be addressed are in Section J, Attachment 10.

- 72. Would it be possible to clarify how Offeror’s can demonstrate “meaningful, clear and convincing significant connection of experience to work scope as required in L.2.e.2 of the DRFP?**

We do not intend to give advice on proposal preparation. It is the Offeror’s responsibility to determine the specific content of the proposal in meeting the RFP requirements.

- 73. Does the team need to have experience in all areas on the experience matrix (attachment A)?**

There is a value in being able to show experience in as many work scope elements as possible, i.e., a company with more experience will be more highly rated than a company with less experience.

- 74. Clarify Tab 5 requirement: Does GSA require 1 experience reference for each work element in every monetary tier?**

The solicitation requires 3 experience examples at each monetary tier for each work scope element.

- 75. Where in the proposal can Offeror's describe their management practices? TAB 5? And is the current page count of 20 adequate?**

Offerors should be careful to respond to the RFP with the information that is being specifically requested and placed in the identified TABS. The page limitation will more than likely be increased to 120 for FA1 and 96 for FA2.

- 76. Will the page limitation for TAB 5 be increased to accommodate the requirements to address "experience" in TAB L?**

The CPP page limitations will more than likely be increased to 120 for FA1 and 96 for FA2.

- 77. Is it fair to assume that the modifications to the SDVOSB GWAC (4/15/05) will be in the final Alliant SB GWAC? Specifically, the change to expand the number of pages allowed under "Contract Performance Plan" from 20 pages per FA to 100+ pages?**

Please don't connect the two. See question 75 on the page limitations.

#### **FUNCTIONAL AREA RELATIONSHIP**

- 78. If you prime in both FA during the evaluation could you be selected in 1 but not the other?**

Yes

- 79. Are small businesses precluded or discouraged from bidding both functional areas? Can they be separate proposals?**

Offerors may offer under both FA1 and FA2 or just one FA. They are required to be separate proposals.

- 80. If you bid FA 1 and FA2 but ½ of your qualifications are in each are you still evaluated equally? In other words are you going to change FA definitions and if not, companies whose qualifications fall 50% in one & 50% in another stand less of a chance of winning, i.e., evaluation will be per functional category on a stand alone basis. Correct?**

Each FA will be evaluated independently.

- 81. Will each award apply to 1 functional area, or may an award provide for both?**

If the same firm was successful in both functional areas, they are likely to be assigned two contracts, one per FA. That matter is within the administrative discretion of the Government. The response to question 80 clearly indicates that each functional area award will be independently arrived at during the evaluation process.

- 82. With only 2 functional areas, are small businesses being given opportunity for R&D or innovation w/emerging technologies?**

R&D specific to Information Technology and emerging technologies are clearly addressed in the solicitation. See C.11.1(6).

- 83. Are (2) complete and separate proposal submittals required if you are bidding both functional areas?**

Yes

- 84. Is there any material difference between the FA's in Alliant SB and VETS?**

Alliant SB includes Cost-Reimbursement contracting.

- 85. Can a SB just bid on one of the two functional areas?**

Yes

- 86. Alliant SB has 2 FAs. Instead of having vendors attempt bidding either FA entirely, is it possible to quote for logical sub divisions?**

No

## **SCOPE**

- 87. Will certifications/assessment levels such as SEI CMM, ISO 9000:2000, etc. be considered in the evaluation process?**

Not at the contract level. However, individual task orders may include specific requirements/qualifications/evaluation criteria.

- 88. There was a lack of enterprise architecture and applications development listed in the functional areas checklist. Are these areas of expertise going to be bid to small business teams?**

Enterprise architecture and applications development is a primary focus of FA2.

- 89. On hand out why are elements of Alliant not carried over to SB Alliant? (interested party, refreshment, subcontract, minor installation)**

Alliant SB was designed with small businesses in mind. Alliant SB has incidental construction, an interested parties survey and list on the Alliant SB website, doesn't require subcontracting plans because it is a small business set-aside and has built in refreshment.

- 90. The solicitation notes that there may be minor construction involved with some of the projects. There is also a great requirement for some sort of relocation in some of the efforts. Will there be an expansion of IT contractor's role in managing and integrating these type efforts and then will there be labor categories established for these specialists?**

It is always incumbent on the contractor to manage task orders in accordance with the underlying contract and applicable laws and regulations. It is not contemplated that additional labor categories will be added to the RFP or resulting contract. See Section B.4.4 which contemplates the use of materially different (specialized) labor categories for individual task orders.

- 91. Please clarify the “worldwide commitment to perform” requirement, as this is often a challenging one for small business, especially on-site vs. off-site requirements.**

The RFP contemplates that small businesses will be able to build capacity through joint ventures/subcontracting to better meet the requirements of Alliant SB. Contractors can use their business judgment in electing to respond or not respond to task order opportunities. Failure to actively participate in the contract can result in a Government decision not to exercise an option to extend.

- 92. How much lead-time will there be for staffing?**

Lead time for staffing is not spelled out specifically at the contract level. There may be specialized requirements regarding staffing at the task order level.

- 93. Primary NAICS Code – does this mean there will be other NAICS codes depending upon the task order/contract?**

The applicable NAICS codes for the Alliant SB are enumerated in Section C.10 of the Draft RFP. The primary NAICS code is designated as 541512.

- 94. For Alliant SB, why not have some of the specialty functional areas such as business process re-engineering? Some small businesses specialize in these areas.**

See Section C.11.2(4) of the Draft RFP.

- 95. Alliant (per web site) allows both IT & business consulting (MOBIS type) services. Alliant SB is IT only. Can the business consulting services be added to Alliant SB? Many SB offer these services at a very high level.**

The Alliant SB scope is very robust as it stands today.

- 96. As MDOT certified do we also have to be 8(a) certified to participate in GWAC?**

No. Neither apply.

- 97. In the small business draft RFP, the single NAICS code does not match the requirements of section C. Are you planning to add enough NAICS codes to match section C?**

The applicable NAICS codes for the Alliant SB are enumerated in Section C.10 of the Draft RFP. The primary NAICS code is designated as 541512 based upon our history with small business GWACs.

- 98. Alliant & Alliant SB – What scope differences?**

There are some differences. Offerors can read the statement of work for both solicitations to look for differences.

- 99. How is the issue of “security clearance” handled? Do we need active clearance in place? This has been a problem for us in previous GSA.**

Security clearances don't have to be in hand to qualify for contract award. Having those credentials will allow you to compete for task orders requiring them. See Section H.8 of the Alliant SB Draft RFP.

- 100. Is the list of IT services within the draft solicitation final, i.e., can other IT Services areas be added like service orientated architectures (SOA)?**

The requirements are written very broad so that most Information Technology Services would fall within the work scope elements enumerated in the Alliant SB solicitation.

- 101. Will telecom be part of the Alliant SB GWAC, since most telecom systems are becoming IP based?**

Alliant SB is not focused on telecommunications, but does include some limited aspects of it as established in Section C. Traditional dial tone (local and long distance) is not part of Alliant SB.

- 102. For performance based contract – is it anticipated that earned value accounting (EVA) will be required on task orders? If yes, a project controller labor category should be added.**

FAR Case 2004-019, Earned Value Management System (EVMS) is currently out for public comment. We believe the incidence of this work under Alliant SB will be low and may be addressed via established solicitation terms. When implemented, determination on the applicability of EVMS to a given project will be made by the ordering agency at the task order level.

- 103. Can an explanation of what the Government's concept of telemedicine under Alliant will encompass be provided? This can be anything from common dial telephone service to real time, wide band video from a battlefield location to a U.S. hospital.**

Telemedicine is an umbrella term that encompasses various technologies as part of a coherent health service information resource management program. Telemedicine is the capture, display, storage and retrieval of medical images and data towards the creation of a computerized patient record and managed care. For purposes of the Alliant SB telemedicine only includes the Information Technology portion, i.e., it does not include the actual delivery of medical care through Doctors, Nurses, etc. It is conceivable that both common dial telephone service and wide band video from a battlefield location to a U.S. hospital could be part of a telemedicine solution.

- 104. Will GSA consider adding a category under FA 1 for high performance computing (sp?)(commodity Linux clusters, supercomputers, etc.) – a highly specialized form of systems Ops & Mgmt? It is an area of increasing interest to your customers.**

The Alliant SB scope of work is written broadly in order to capture, in essence, the entire sphere of potential Information Technology services requirements.

- 105. Considering FAR 52.244-6(b), can a federal "commercial items" required acquisition percentage be added to the RFP?**

No

## **PRICING ISSUES (SECTION B)**

- 106. Please explain what the ECI index is and how that applies to the contract adjustment prior to exercise of option year. Additionally, how does that affect escalation rates?**

The ECI index is explained in Section B.9 and B.9.1 as well as Attachment 6 of the Alliant SB Draft RFP. Simply put, a percentage (factor) will be arrived at utilizing the average of the

increases/decreases in the index from the previous five years. This factor will be applied to years six through ten (compounded) one time at option renewal.

**107. How many labor categories are required in order to qualify for the Alliant Small Business contract?**

Offerors must price all labor categories.

**108. How does Alliant SB define other direct costs (ODC's)?**

Section B.4.4 of the Alliant SB DRFP addresses this.

**109. Where in Section B are multipliers to be addressed?**

Section B.4.4

**110. Please explain the "combined" offsite-onsite rates using a simple example of how we can escalate between base year 1 & 2. What does combined mean?**

Combined simply means that one (same) hourly rate will apply to base years one and two. The estimated quantities for those two years were added together and presented in combined fashion.

## **EVALUATION**

**111. Will small and large business evaluation criteria be the same?**

Alliant and Alliant SB have different evaluation methodologies.

**112. Why the limitation on 20 LB and 40 SB awards? (and 50 B large and 15 B small)**

The total awards are estimated. The primary reason is that awards will be made for two Functional Areas on Alliant SB (20+20=40). The count of 20 in each functional area is an approximate number. The ceilings of both Alliant and Alliant SB are reflective of the small business goals of GSA/Federal Government.

**113. What evaluation factors will be used? Past performance? Technical? Price?**

See Section L and M of the Alliant SB Draft RFP.

**114. When will you decide how many small business Alliant awards?**

That determination will be made after evaluation of the offerors concludes.

**115. You are going to get a very large number of small business bids. Will it be a two stage process with a downselect prior to submission of final proposal? If so, what date is the date that determines where to calculate the \$21 million prior three years from?**

There is not a two stage process for the Alliant SB solicitation. The offeror must be a small business at the time the proposal is submitted.

**116. Are they evaluating the team or the prime contractor?**

Alliant SB contemplates an evaluation of the entire team in evaluating the Contractor

Performance Plan (CPP) in Section L.2.e.

- 117. Can the past performances and experience of team members be included in the proposal and evaluated as having equal weight as the prime Offeror's past performance and experience?**

Past performance and experience are two distinct/separate evaluation criteria in Alliant SB. Past performance will only measure the prime offeror (L.2.d). The entire team will be evaluated in regards to the CPP at Section L.2.e.

#### **ALLIANT SB RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CONTRACTS**

- 118. Would GSA IT schedule 70 remain after Alliant is awarded?**

Of course.

- 119. What influence does the Marine Corps CEOss MAL and the Army's AMCOM Express have on Alliant and vice versa?**

Alliant SB is a strong contender among many contracts available for use by civilian and DoD customers.

- 120. How will GSA determine which work will be put on the Alliant SB contract & which work will be put on Alliant?**

GSA's Alliant SB procuring contracting officer will not be making any determinations on awarding task orders against Alliant or Alliant SB. Agency (ordering) contracting officers working on task orders may have discretion on the vehicle selected to meet requirements. Ordering agencies should follow all agency, or other, regulatory requirements in determining whether or not to set-aside a requirement for small business

- 121. How will work be allocated to Alliant vs. other contracts such as GSA schedule 70?**

See the response to question 120.

- 122. What will be the determining factor for competing individual tasks under GSA Alliant versus GSA Alliant SB on the agency level, once awarded?**

Civilian and DoD agencies will make the determination as to what contract vehicle to use, if any. Alliant SB is a strong contender amongst available options.

- 123. My company holds a GSA schedule 70 contract. What is the advantage to also holding an Alliant SB contract?**

Companies must make their own business decisions as to what contracts to pursue.

- 124. What incentives do the government agencies have to solicit IT services through the Alliant or Alliant SB contract?**

GSA has made every effort to craft Alliant and Alliant SB with robust Information Technology scopes and ease of use. Additionally, Alliant SB can be used to satisfy agency small business goals.

**125. What is the impact of the recent DOD statement that Alliant is not to be used for DOD projects?**

We are not aware of this statement.

**126. What impact do you think that MAC contracts like Seaport-e will have on opportunities under Alliant?**

See question 119.

**127. Do you have any indications from DoD that they will be encouraged to use Alliant & Alliant SB? Has Diedre Lee made any supportive comments?**

GSA has ongoing conversations with DoD about using GSA vehicles.

**128. Will the agency fee for Alliant SB be less than the fee for Alliant? This will help promote and drive small business volume. What are the agency fees to use?**

The Contract Access Fee will be the same for Alliant and Alliant SB. Currently it is ¾ of one percent.

**129. How does the Service Disabled Vet GWAC compare with the Alliant SB GWAC?**

The two GWACs satisfy different socioeconomic goals. Alliant SB will permit cost reimbursement contracting while VETS doesn't.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**130. Will sole source under \$3M task orders be allowed under Alliant SB contract?**

No

**131. Your estimate of time frame between release & due date?**

Since there was a draft RFP, it is likely to be 60 days.

**132. What is the likelihood that the final RFP will slip past the July 1 release date?**

The final RFP is still scheduled to be released in July 2005.

**133. Please explain Clinger-Cohen?**

Clinger-Cohen Act is another name for the Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA) of 1996. ITMRA established the authority for Government Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWAC) for Information Technology.

**134. Will you send out automated updates and amendments to the interested parties?**

The final RFP and amendments will be posted to FedBizOpps. Potential offerors should also periodically check the Alliant SB web site at [www.gsa.gov/alliantsb](http://www.gsa.gov/alliantsb).



**135. Is it possible to have a BPA under this contract? What is the limit \$\$ task orders? Is it a T&M type contract?**

BPAs can't be awarded against Alliant SB. There is no limit to a task order value other than the ceiling on the Alliant SB contract (\$15 billion). Alliant SB identifies permitted contract types in Section C.

**136. Will state and local governments be able to use this GWAC vehicle?**

State and local government usage of a GWAC would require statutory authorization.

**137. If a company is currently using a DCAA approved accounting system, but has not been audited yet, will that affect task order bids?**

In accordance with G.23 of the Draft RFP Alliant SB awardees do not have to have the appropriate cost reimbursement credentials/audit approval in place at time of award. Alliant SB contractors must have audit approvals in place within one year from award date and before being eligible for cost reimbursement task orders. See Section J, Attachment 9.

**138. If we win an Alliant SB contract award, would we have to cost compete individual task orders or will our contract awarded rates be accepted?**

The hourly rates in the base contract are ceiling rates. Task order awards will be competed which usually results in pricing lower than the ceiling rates.

**139. Will any RFP's or other opportunities be posted via ebuy or other such sites?**

E-Buy will be a primary method to provide fair opportunity competition to contract holders.

**140. Will you make available a listing of all attendees – both individuals and companies with contact information?**

Attendee lists are posted on [www.gsa.gov/alliant](http://www.gsa.gov/alliant) in the document library.

**141. Agencies desiring a delegation of authority are required to complete training. Q: Will you publish a list of such trained & approved order contracting officers?**

The Small Business GWAC center will not publish a list of contracting officers delegated to use the Alliant SB GWAC.

**142. Once awarded the SB GWAC, how does GSA help us promote our small business to potential DoD/Fed agency customers?**

GSA will be actively involved in marketing the Alliant SB GWAC to potential customers.